December 12, 2014 Ebola Response Update

[Announcer] This program is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

[Announcer] Ebola's high fatality rate often makes news – but hidden within that headline is the fact that many people survive. There are now thousands of Ebola survivors.

[Announcer] In April 2014, the Firestone Company in Liberia started an Ebola survivor program.

[Announcer] Dr. Erik Reaves is a medical officer with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and he saw the program in action. It's a critical program, he says, because some Ebola survivors in many parts of West Africa are shunned when they leave the hospital.

[*Dr. Reaves*] "As difficult as having Ebola can be, surviving could be equally difficult because of the inability to return to your community, or earn a living wage, or provide for your family or yourself.

[Announcer] The program provides mattresses, food, cooking oil and money to each survivor. A team is sent to the survivor's community before they return, so community members can ask questions and learn more about the virus.

[*Dr. Reaves*] "When survivors come home, it's important for community members to feel safe. This reintegration program provides the resources to allow people to return with dignity and without stigmatization from the community. Survivors are presented a certificate of health showing that, after having survived Ebola, they no longer have infection and are no longer contagious."

[Announcer] Survivors are welcomed back into their community with a large celebration – attended by their friends, community members and their healthcare team.

[*Dr. Reaves*] "The celebration of the return of survivors to their community shows communities that Ebola is not a death sentence - that people can survive."

[Announcer] Dr. Reaves and a team of CDC researchers have published their observations and hope it will lead to similar programs throughout West Africa.

[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO